



Department of State ^{POL 15-1 AFG}
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TELEGRAM

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Kabul 5636
9-27-72

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ACTION NEA-12

INFO OCT-01 EUR-20 IO-12 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-08 IH-02 INR-06

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 P-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-14 USIA-12

PC-04 E-11 COM-08 COME-00 TRSE-00 SSC-01 RSR-01 AID-20

/150 W

076315

R 270330Z SEP 72
 FM AMEMBASSY KABUL
 TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0420
 INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA
 AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD
 AMEMBASSY LONDON
 AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
 AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
 AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
 USMISSION USUN NY

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SUBJ: GOVERNMENT -- AFGHAN STYLE; OR, IS ZAHIR STILL PM?

REF: (A) KABUL 5597 (NOTAL); (B) KABUL 5563 (NOTAL)

1. HIS MAJESTY EVENING SEPT 25 REJECTED PM ZAHIR'S RESIGNATION (REF A) AND ORDERED PM CONTINUE IN POWER (TEXTS BY SEPTTEL).

2. WE NOW HAVE CLEARER PICTURE OF PRESENT SITUATION, ALTHOUGH TIMING OF FUTURE MOVES STILL UNCLEAR AND POSSIBLY SUBJECT TO FURTHER CHANGE. IT IS CERTAIN ZAHIR WANTS TO RESIGN; BUT TIMING HIS SEPT 24 RESIGNATION STILL UNCLEAR ALTHOUGH FIRM DECISION RESIGN REACHED PRIOR PM'S GERMAN TRIP. WE ALSO ARE CERTAIN KING HAD FIRMLY DECIDED SEPT 24 ACCEPT PM'S RESIGNATION AND NAME SHAFIQ PM. IT IS ALSO CLEAR THAT SHAFIQ ON MORNING SEPT 25 MOVED IN, TOOK OVER DECISION-MAKING AND CONVINCED HM THAT NOW WAS NOT PROPITIOUS MOMENT FOR CHANGE IN GOVT. WE ASSUME HIS

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FORM 86-1050

DECLASSIFIED
 E.O. 12958, Sec. 3.4
 NND 969001
 By HRM/vsu Date 9/16/97



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REPRODUCED AT THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES

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ARGUMENTS BASED UPON ANTICIPATED ABSENCE BOTH HM AND SHAFIQ BEGINNING SEPT 26 AND CONTINUING PROBLEM OF LEGISLATIVE VERSUS EXECUTIVE. WE UNDERSTAND HM AGREED WITH SHAFIQ THAT ZAHIR SHOULD REMAIN IN OFFICE UNTIL KING RETURNS. THEN SECOND LOOK WOULD BE TAKEN WITH PARTICULAR EMPHASIS ON HOW PARLIAMENT (WHICH RECONVENES OCTOBER 14) IS BEHAVING. WE FURTHER UNDERSTAND THAT NEW GOVT WITH SHAFIQ AS PM WILL BE FORMED AT THAT TIME. BUT, IN REALITY, SHAFIQ HAS ASSUMED COMPLETE CHARGE AS OF NOW. ZAHIR WILL RUN GOVT IN SHAFIQ'S ABSENCE BUT SHAFIQ WILL HAVE FINAL AUTHORITY WHEN HE RETURNS EVEN THOUGH ZAHIR WILL BE PM IN NAME UNTIL HM RETURNS AND CARRIES OUT PRESENT INTENTIONS.

3. QUESTION MOST FOREIGN OBSERVERS AND THINKING AFGHANS ARE PONDERING IS, WHY WAS IT DONE THIS WAY AND WHY WAS THERE THIS UNTYPICAL ADMISSION OF FAILURE OF PM'S RESIGNATION MESSAGE? MY FIRST BELIEF WAS THAT PM ZAHIR HAD CHOSEN HIS WORDS IN ORDER FORCE KING ACCEPT HIS RESIGNATION. I NOW INCLINED CONCLUDE THAT WORDING WAS KING'S WAY OF SHIFTING BLAME AND THAT ZAHIR IS TO BE MADE SCAPEGOAT FOR FAILURE HIS GOVT AND KING WORK OUT EFFECTIVE MODUS OPERANDI WITH PARLIAMENT, LACK OF WHICH HAS STYMIED GOVT ACTION IN ALMOST EVERY FIELD OF ENDEAVOR. IF SHAFIQ HAD NOT INTERVENED AS HE DID, HM WOULD APPARENTLY HAVE CARRIED THROUGH HIS PLAN AND NAMED SHAFIQ PM SEPT 25.

4. STILL UNDECIDED ARE RETURN DATES TO KABUL OF HM AND SHAFIQ. IT APPEARS SHAFIQ WILL PROCEED FROM TURKEY TO INY FOR UNGA. WE BELIEVE HIS STAY IN INY WILL LAST ONLY FEW DAYS. ON ASSUMPTION ZAHIR AND SHAFIQ KEEP DOMESTIC POLITICAL SITUATION UNDER CONTROL IT NOW APPEARS HM WILL COMPLETE HIS VACATION IN EUROPE BEFORE RETURNING.

5. WHILE IT DOES NOT SEEM POSSIBLE THAT GOVT COULD DISCOVER NEW NADIR OF INACTIVITY, I AM FORCED TO CONCLUDE THAT IMMEDIATE PERIOD UNTIL SHAFIQ RETURNS WILL UNDOUBTEDLY SEE VIRTUAL CESSATION OF ALL ACTIVITY. EXCLUDED FROM THIS APPEARS TO BE MINISTER SERAJ'S EMERGENCY RELIEF PROGRAM FOR CENTRAL HIGHLANDS WHICH GOING FORWARD FULL BLAST.
GDS.
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NNQ 969001
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PA/HO, Department of State

E.O. 12958, as amended

June 9, 2005